**PECT’s CHESS Service is helping residents to keep warm and safe.**

With lockdown and the cold spring, now more than ever, we are spending more time in our homes which means we might see a significant increase in our energy bills. This can be a cause of worry, especially if we don’t have enough money to cover the costs.

Cambridgeshire Home Energy Support Service (CHESS), a service provided by environmental charity PECT and Cambridgeshire ACRE, is supporting vulnerable residents in Northern Cambridgeshire with free energy advice and support.

The free service can offer you a wide range of support, from providing top-up fuel vouchers and debt relief of up to £500, to providing small home improvements and accessing additional support such as grants.

CHESS has recently helped support an individual who is a full-time career for her son and was struggling financially with electricity bills and her oil central heating.

Karen Igho, Health and Wellbeing Lead at PECT, said:

“When she was referred onto us, she hadn’t had any oil for two weeks and had been relying on electric heaters which were costing a lot of money on her prepayment meter.

“In response to this, a tank of oil was ordered the same day of the call and was delivered a few days later. We also applied for a Stay Well Grant on her behalf. This was approved a week later, and we were able to top-up the electricity prepayment meter which will last for a significant amount of time.”

“We have also provided several energy-saving items, including energy-saving light bulbs, a draught excluder and draught tape”

This has had a significant impact on the comfort and quality of life, the full-time career said:

“If I hadn’t been referred, I would never have known the help was out there. We have been in difficult circumstances and this has made such a huge difference for me mentally in the past few weeks. My son is also happier now that we can have the heating on.”

If you would like to find out more about the service and discuss your situation, you can freephone on 0800 8021773, email warmhomes@pect.org.uk or visit www.pect.org.uk/WarmHomes. To receive support, you must meet eligibility criteria.

To make this service possible, Warm Homes has been funded by the Energy Industry Voluntary Redress Scheme, please visit www.energyredress.org.uk for more details.

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**Notes to editor**

**PECT**

PECT ([www.pect.org.uk](http://www.pect.org.uk)) is an independent charity creating more sustainable places. We are working to protect and enhance the environment to leave a legacy for future generations.

PECT educates, inspires, and motivates individuals and organisations to change their behaviour to deliver a positive environmental impact. The charity specialises in using eco-education and awareness-raising to encourage behaviour change and collective action at a local level, in order to share learnings and effect change regionally, nationally, and even internationally.

**Cambridgeshire ACRE**

Cambridgeshire ACRE ([www.cambsacre.org.uk](http://www.cambsacre.org.uk)) is a rural development charity that works throughout Cambridgeshire and beyond enabling people to take positive action to enhance their rural communities. For further information on the work of Cambridgeshire ACRE, please contact Alison Brown, Head of Business Services on 01353 865029 or email alison.brown@cambsacre.org.uk.

**For press enquiries please contact:**

Laura Donington, Marketing and Communications Manager at PECT, at marketing@pect.org.uk . For further details about PECT visit [www.pect.org.uk](http://www.pect.org.uk)